# Ye Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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[One of our young readers writes the following lines to her brother who has half completed his apprenticeship.—ED.]

## Step by Step.

STEP by step we climb the ladder,
Step by step we go through life,
And each little ray of sunshine
Helps us in the weary strife.

Step by step, through all the windings
Of the trade which you've begun,
You may reach a high position
When your four year's course is done.

Be not wearied in well doing,
Do each day the best you can,
Deal uprightly in your business,
Be a true and honest man.

Step by step, go bravely onward.
Though the world may use you ill;
Every new and hard position,
Strive with all your might to fill,

We can never know the future,
We can ne'er recall the past,
We have only just the present,—
Let's improve it while it last.

Struggle onward, ne'er look backward,
Though the way seem drear and long;
Soon you'll see the sunshine gleaming,
All the brighter for the storm,

Step by step, go on and upward;
It will pay us well to wait,
If at last we find we've journeyed
Step by step, through heaven's gate.

—*The Little Star.*

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THE teacher of an infant school had her attention called to one little fellow who was not listening to what was said. She had been teaching her class the elements of English history, and, wishing to see if he knew what she had been talking about, she suddenly asked, "Johnny, who killed King Rufus?" With a surprised look he replied, "Why, I didn't krow he was dead!"

For the Myrtle.

## Pussy Cat Minnie.

PART II.

ANNIE was much grieved at the loss of the cat; but they were all agreed that if Minnie loved her home well enough to walk five miles alone in a dark night to get back to it, she ought to be allowed to stay there.

So Minnie was not disturbed any more by being taken to Annie's home.—Annie came frequently to her mother's and she and Minnie became first rate friends again. Annie said to her, the first time that she came after the escape;

"Oh, poor old Minnie. It was very naughty of me to carry you away from your home, that you love so well. If you will forgive me Minnie, I will never do so again."

Pussy cat listened with great joy to what Annie was saying, and purred her forgiveness in a very unmistakable manner. Then they became friends, and Minnie always trusted Annie just as she had done before she was carried away.

Annie enjoyed this return of Minnie's confidence, and loved her better for it, than she had ever done in all her life before.

Things went on very smoothly now with pussy cat Minnie. She was very kindly treated. And she felt so sure of her home that she was very happy.

But the time came when poor Minnie had to

learn the lesson, that is taught so often to us all; that there is nothing in this world, that can be depended on to remain unchanged.

One night when Minnie and her mistress were very sound asleep, the grand old house took fire.

There was a little hole in one of the stove-pipes where it went into the wall. And through that hole crept a spark of fire

It was a little thing, so little that no one would have thought any harm could come of it.

It was just like the wrong actions that many a little boy or girl have done, thinking,—Oh, that is so small it can never do any harm.

So thought the little spark as it crept through the hole in the pipe. I am too small to have it make any difference where I go.

But under the pipe, there was some very dry wood—so dry that it was just like tinder, and when the spark of fire touched it, it began to burn.

No one was awake in the neighborhood, to stop the mischief that was going on, and so the hungry flames ate the wood all round the pipe, and, like bad actions after they have been concealed as long as possible, it came at length to the light.

On and on, it ran; faster and faster, after it was where the wind could blow on it, and before any one knew that there was a fire, it had got well under way.

It happened that a man who had been belated about getting home was passing that way about midnight, and seeing the flames, he cried,

"Fire! fire! fire!" all the people in the neighborhood awoke, and rushed into the street, to see whose house was burning.

But they did more than look at the flames after they got there.

Every body that could work, worked with all the strength they had. But the wind was blowing hard, and it could undo in five minutes more than the men could do in ten.

It was a long time before they began to get the fire under control. But at last they could see that there was a little hope of saving a part, at least, of the building. The men worked the harder, when they began to hope, and after a few hours they had put the fire out entirely. But the grand old house was ruined.

The walls were left standing, but all the woodwork about the place was gone. The windows were all gone, and only great staring holes were in the places where the windows had been.

The ruin was pitiful to see, and every one that went that way, felt sad hearted; for the old house had been standing long before any one lived that is now on the earth, and every body remembered it from their childhood, and loved to see it standing there.

It had always been kept in excellent repair, and was really an ornament to the neighborhood in which it stood. But now its glory had past. It was only a wreck—a lonely ruin.

Are you wondering what had become of pussy-cat Minnie all this time, while the fire was burning. She had been dreadfully frightened; but was not burned or hurt in the least.

As soon as the first door had been opened in the burning house, Minnie had made her escape from it, and fled away to an orchard that was not far from the house. It was a place where she had takeu many a nap on summer otternoons, and she knew every tree, and almost every blade of grass in it.

Now she ran and hid herself there, and from the corner where she was hidden, watched the burning of the house she loved so well.

No one thought of the cat while the fire was burning. They were too busy trying to put out the fire, and to save the furniture, to think of anything else. But after the fire was all over, Mrs. Young began to remember that she had not seen poor Minnie since the excitement began.

It was not yet morning, and the night was very dark, but Mrs. Young was so anxious to know whether Minnie was alive, that she came back to the ruin, from the neighbor's house where she was stopping, and called to see if she could find poor Minnie.

Minnie heard her mistress calling, and was delighted by the sound. For she had imagined in her fright, that her mistress might have been killed in the course of that terrible fire. Now she came out from her hiding-place in the orchard, and rubbed against her mistress's feet, as if she were saying,

"I am so glad, so glad that you are not gone too as well as the house.

Mrs. Young could not help crying, as she and poor Minnie stood there alone, by what had so lately been their happy home, but was now only a smoking ruin. It was a lonely, very lonely time for them both.

The next day Mrs Young had the furniture that was left from the fire, moved into a house that was standing empty about a mile from the

house that she had been thrust out from so suddenly.

Among other things that were moved Minnie was taken very carefully to the new house.

They took her this time in a basket the cover of which they tied down preventing her from escaping.

Minnie did not like at all to be carried in this way. She shook about so in the basket that it frightened her nearly to death. And then she didn't know where she was being carried, and she didn't wish to be carried anywhere away from her dear old home. But she had no choice about it.

When the basket was set down, it was in the cellar of the house to which her mistress had moved. They took the cover off from the basket, and Minnie was not long in jumping out

They offered her food to eat. But Minnie had no appetite. She ran round aud round the cellar, trying to find a place to get out, that she might run back again to the old place.

But they had very carefully closed all of the windows before they put Minnie into the cellar, and she found no place large enough to get through. In this prison she was left several days.

Her mistress came down to see her very often, and tried to get her to eat. But Minnie was too homesick to eat.

At last M s. Young allowed her to come into the upper rooms of the house, to see if she would not be better contented.

Minnie watched her opportunity, and once when an outside door was left a little ajar, she rushed through the opening ; and ran away down the road to the old house. When she arrived there, she was very unhappy, wandering in and out of the deserted rooms, and leaping out through the gaping windows.

The neighbors caught her and carried her back to Mrs. Young. But it was of no use. She ran away again the first opportunity she had And so she continued to do for weeks, refusing to be reconciled or comforted in the new home.

At last one morning she was found dead on the doorstep of the burnt house.

Hunger and grief had done their work, and this was the end of poor pussy cat Minnie.

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As nothing truly valuable can be attained without industry, so there can be no persevering industry without a deep sense of the value of time.

## Useful Advice to Boys.

To throw stones. Fold each one carefully in a feather bed, and give good notice to all in the neighborhood when you are going to pitch.

To carry gunpowder in the pocket. Soak it well in cold water, then wrap it up in a cover ot oiled silk.

To slide down the banisters. Let a surgeon sit upon the lower stair. Also carry a pailful ot poultice in each ot your hands, as you may need it.

To get rid of studying your lessons. Eat a hot mince pie every night, for one week, before going to bed.

To cure creaky boots. Wear them always in going into the cake pantry.

To be polite to sisters. Get their big brother to introduce you to them.

## Our Little Mischief.

Two dimpled hands, careless of dirt ;
Two roving feet, fearless of hurt ;
Two dancing eyes ; one saucy nose ;
Two laughing lips, red as a rose !

Dear little Mischief ! blithe as a bird,
All the while singing, the sweetest e'er heard,
Keeping us busy as busy can be,
With her queer pranks and innecent glee !

We give to the Shepherd who loveth his sheep,
Our darling Mischief, safely to keep ;
Trusting that he life's dark clouds will part,
So that the sunshine may gladden her heart !

—*Guiding Star.*

## Sayings and Doings.

BEFORE SCHOOL.

Quarter of nine ! Boys and girls, do you hear ?"
"One more buckwheat, then ; be quick, mother dear !"
"Where is my lunch-box ?" "Under the shelf,
Just in the place where you left it yourself."
"I can't say my table !" "O, find me my cap !"
(One kiss for mamma and sweet sis ia her lap.]
"Be good, dear." "I'll try." "9 times 9's 81."
"Take your mittens." "All right." "Hurry up, Bill ; let's run."
With a slam of the door they are off, girls and boys,
And the mother draws breath in a lull of their noise.

AFTER SCHOOL.

"Don't wake up the baby ! Come gently, my dear !"
"O, mother ! I've torn my new dress—just look here !
I am sorry ; I only was climbing the wall !"
"O, mother, my map was the nicest of all !"
"And Nelly, in spelling, went up to the head !"
"O, say, can I go to the hill with my sled ?"
"I've got such a toothache !" "The teacher's unfair !"
"Is the dinner most ready ? I'm just like a bear !"
Be patient, worn mother, they're growing up fast ;
These nursery whirlwinds, not long do they last.
A still, lonely house would be far worse than noise ;
Rejoice and be glad in your brave girls and boys.

## God Sees.

"WHO will know it if we do not go to Sunday School to-day? there is a meeting in the grove and I would much rather go there."

"I would like to go to the meeting but mother would not like to have us go.

"She will never know it. We can go home at noon, as we always do, and nobody will be the wiser.

"But God would know if mother didn't. He will be at the grove meeting, and see us there, and at the Sunday School, and see our vacant places."

Think dear children how wise this little Fannie was who made this reply to an older sister who was trying to temp her away from the Sunday School. If you are ever tempted to stay at home, or go elsewhere in the hour that you ought to spend in your Sunday School, remember that God will be there and will see your vacant places.

*Mrs. E. M. Bruce.*

THE LITTLE PENSIONER.

For the Myrtle.

## The Wee Bird.

O sister dear, run quickly here,
And see this little bird,
He has been listening at the pane,
And caught my very word.

I said I wished a bird would come
And light upon the sill,
He hops at once into my sight,
And cries, I will, I will.

I wonder whose wee bird it is,
And how it got away,
The one that owns it, will be sad
Through all this livelong day.

I think I see her weeping now,
Within the lonely room,
And wishing for the birdie, that
Will never more go home.

If we could only catch it,
In some skillful kindly way,
And let the owner know 'twas here,
'Twould be a happy day.

I wonder, if I set a cage
Upon the window-sill,
And ask him to walk into it,
If he would say — I will.

I learned — 'twas only yesterday,
When at the Sunday School —
A little lesson; that they called
The holy golden rule.

It said; whatever you would have
Your fellows do to you,
That you must strive in every hour
Most faithfully to do.

And I am sure, if I had lost
A little darling bird
And any one from near or far,
Had of its welfare heard —

No other thing that they could do,
Would be so kind to me,
As putting birdie in a cage
That I might come and see,

And claim my own; and take
My little darling home.
I'd fasten up the cage so strong
It never more could roam.

To catch this little bird,
In earnest, I must try.
Do bring the cage dear Mary,
Before he's time to fly.

For if it were my birdie gone
I plainly feel and see
What I would have the finder
Do quickly unto me.

No Jennie, it were idle,
To be seeking for this bird,
The Owner of it, heareth
Youre very willing word.

He will bless your kind endeavor,
For he sees, as none else see
How you're trying to be friendly
As you'd have your comrades be.

But this little bird hath never
Had an owner on the earth,
'Tis a robin: and to freedom
It was given at its birth.

There are no eyes dull with weeping
For its wanderings to-day.
We owe nothing to its Master
But to love and watch and pray.

—*E. M. Bruce.*

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BOYS and girls will always show to strangers whether they are well-bred and polite or not, by the manner in which they open or shut a door. If they open it in a hurry and in a rush, or if they neglect to shut it, or shut it carelessly or with a slam, they show that they are not well-behaved or polite. You should always open and close doors gently and carefully.

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CHEERFULNESS makes the mind clearer, gives tone to thought, and adds grace and beauty to the countenance.

## Stolen Property.

"I know all about Sadie's birthday party, for all she tried to keep it such a secret, said Lotty Mills, with a look of triumph.

"How did you find out?" I asked.

"Why, you see, Josie and I were reading a story under the elm tree this noon, and Sadie came and sat in the window with Carie Richards, and they talked it all over, and we heard every word. She's going to have—"

"Stop, stop! do you suppose I want to share any stolen property?"

"Stolen property, auntie? Why we didn't listen—we couldn't help hearing, for she talked right out loud."

"That's very true, but she didn't know you were there, so you have no right at all to her secret. A listener is like a pickpocket who creeps up and steels your secrets slily; and you are like a person who sees another drop a purse in the street and picks it up. If you took the money and used it when you knew it was not yours; would you be any more honest than if you had taken it right out of a man's pocket?"

"Why no, auntie! of course I should give it back."

"Or if you could not give it back at once you certainly would keep it safely till you could

That is just what you should do with secrets when people drop them accidentally, and you pick them up. You have no more business to use them than you would have to use money which you got in the same way."

"I believe that is so, auntie; and I won't say a word about that party to any one."

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## A Purpose.

What is your plan in life, Neddie?" I asked a small boy, turning from his big brothers, who were talking about theirs, to which he and I had been listening, — "what is yours, Neddie?"

"I am not big enough for a plan yet," said Neddie; "but I have a purpose."

"That is good: it is not every one who has a purpose. What is your purpose, Neddie!"

"To grow up a good boy, so as to be a good man like my father."

And by the way he said it, it was plain that he meant it. His father was a noble Christian man; and Neddie could not do any better than follow in his steps. A boy with such a purpose will not fail of his mark.

## The Sunday School Conventions.

In these Sunday School Conventions I am particularly interested. The Sunday School, from which we had hoped everything, is indeed, doing much, but might do a great deal more and better. The eyes of all good and judicious men are watching it with an anxious, and sometimes painful solicitude. It has not met the church's expectation. Will it do so hereafter? And if so, by what methods? These, and the like, are questions over which these Sunday School Conventions might produce the needed awakening. I say the needed *awakeuing;* for it is less the new ideas which these conventions present, than the new interest that they create, in which their value lies.

I see by your roport that the question of teaching doctrine, was discussed ably. Had I been able to do as I had intended, I should have urged the importance of teaching doctrine, early, thoroughly, and persistently. For I do feel that very great im portance,'— vitally religious importance — attaches to doctrinal teaching, and from a great mistake about this matter, I believe the cause of religion is greatly suffering to-day.

But I took up my pen just to say let these Sunday School Conventions continue.

Our church and society are doing well here. We are rapidly graduating souls into the higher Heaven. Within a little time, three young ladies of about seventeen, have died from the school, and these among those we could least afford to spare. But such Christian dying, after such Christian living, can hardly be regretted by true Christian faith. For it saith, "Heaven is better." And too, our serried ranks are soon refilled. We expect to baptize and receive to the church, a number next Sunday.

*M. J. S.*

## Notes.

— The Primary Lesson Leaves issued with the *Helper*, have been very decidedly improved.

— The Universalist Publishiug House has just issued a ten-page catalogue of books recommennded by the "Library Book Commissioners," of which Rev. Sumner Ellis is Chairman, with eleven assistants.

— Mrs. E. M. Bruce of Melrose, Mass., is already quite well known to our little folks. But she and they would like to cultivate the acquaintance, and this may be done in the six volumes published this month, by the Universalist Publishing House, and known as "The Happy Heart Series."

— The question was asked in a Convention, "How can we keep the young foiks in the Sunday School when they feel themselves no longer children?" and to which a delegate promptly and pertinently replied: "By building a wall of old folks between them and the door, so high that they ean not climb over," Send that delegate round to Maine.

— Two remarks made by one of our teachers at the Bath Convention cannot be too often repeated: 1. Take one thought rather than many, and labor to impress that deeply in the heart. If this course is persisted in, great good must follow. But where a dozen topics are taken the mind is confused, and generally nothing is impressed. 2. Teach *all* the scholars, not the well-dressed, the respectably connected, or the bright and loveable only. These may need the least instead of the most attention. The dull scholar is the one who needs the most help. The boy disposed to bad ways needs the most encouragement.

## A Sunday School Conference.

Arrangements are being made for a Sunday School Conference, to be held in all Soul's Church, Brooklyn, on Wednesday, Oct. 28th. The programme has not been fully decided upon but probably will not be changed greatly from the following:

Rev. J. M. Pullman, "Parents Relations to the Sunday School." Rev. E. C. Sweetser, "The Teacher's Duties." Rev. C. Fluhrer, "The Relations of the Sunday School to the Church." Rev. J. V. Wilson, "Doctrinal Teaching." Rev. J. A, Seitz, "The Bible Class." Mr. J. P. Davis, a practical illustration of class teaching, a lesson from the *Helper* to be treated. It is to be hoped that the church will be crowded, and not by teachers only, but by parents and all interested in Sunday School work.

## What School is Referred to?

We know a school that tires us every time we visit it. The superintendent is always in such a hurry. He is at the opposite extreme of long-winded; he is short-winded. He is so much afraid of long prayers and long speeches and long sermons, that he puts *his* team into a foam. We have seen horses whose driver did not get them over the ground rapidly, or do much work, but he tired them and fretted them more than a long drive could have done. The jerking-in process irritates, and, in time, will either make the teachers peevish or superficial.

— The Hartford Ct., *Times* gives an interesting account of Children's Sunday at the Church of the Redeemer, celebrated thus late because of the absence of the pastor at a more seasonable time. The church was filled with the children and visitors; and the floral decorations were very beautiful. The wall back of the pulpit was covered with fern draped for a background for the whole, in the shape of a shield. At the right stood a memorial table, filled with offerings in memory of the children who had died since last Children's Sunday' Among these deaths was a little daughter of the pastor. Directly over the pulpit, secured between the two centre pillars, were the words in evergreen letters: "Jesus loves little Children." After the address by the pastor, twelve little girls were baptized, and given a rose-bud as a token of the sacred rite.

— The Universalist Sunday School connected with the church in Ripley, N. Y., held an interesting picnic party in a grove at Barcelona. The attendance was large, and proved to young and old a most enjoyable occasion. The school voted to have a like picnic excursion annually, and to invite the union of such other Universalist churches and those of sister denominations as might find it convenient to join in these proposed anniversaries. The M. E. Sunday School of Westfield held their annual picnic at the same time and place; and the two schools united together in appropriate closing religious exercises. Brief addresses were given by Rev. Mr. Seeley, Methodist, of Westfield, and Rev. I George, Universalist, of Dunkiek, to the gratification of all.

— Simplicity, not eaborateness, is what is required for blackboard illustration. One of the most effective lessons we ever saw was a representation of the twelve apostles by eleven perpendicular marks and one horizontal—because he had fallen.

— Tho poor copies of Christ's life which are presented to us, even in lives of the most sincere Christians, resemble the copies of good pictures made by little children.

## The Two Commandments.

MARK xii 28–34.

You are to learn to-day dear children about the great commandments which Christ gave.

Perhaps some of you think that it makes very little difference whether you honor what Christ's commandments were or not. But we shall try to show you that it makes a great deal of difference. You all wish to live rightly, do you not? To be good boys and girls whom everybody can love, and to grow up to be good men and women who will be a blessing to the world.

There are many ways of learning to be good, A great many good people have tried to teach little boys and girls how to be good. Some of them have succeeded, and some have failed, for it is not an easy thing to teach, and many a person who can live very well themselves cannot tell in words how it is done. Yet these people are very good teachers. They teach by example, and that is the best kind of teaching. But their example can only reach the few people who know them and see them day by day, and the few who hear of their good deeds. If they are able to tell how they do these good works, the words, in which the life story is told, may go a long way, and be a blessing to many who read them.

Now Jesus was one who was able both to do and to teach, He lived all of his life perfectly. He never did wrong deeds. He never spoke wrong words. Whatever he has told us to do we are safe in doing without making any questions about it.

Christ did not give *many* commandments. We would like to have you dear children, learn so that you can repeat perfectly, those that he did give. There are only two of them, and they are very simple.

First — " Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy strength ;"

Second, — " Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Say them over and over many times and then let us try and see whether you are ready to begin to obey them.

Do you my dear little boy or girl to whom we are now talking. Do you love the Lord your God?

We think you are answering that you do not know how to love him. That he seems a great way off, and you do not know how to begin to love him.

He is *not* a great way off. He is very close to every one of you.

You love your father and mother do you not? You are all answering yes to this question, and when we ask you why you love them, you say first, because they are father and mother— and next because they are so good and kind.

Now God is both father and mother to you, He made you. He gave you all that you have in this world. The father and mother whom you love so much in your earthly home, you would never have had, if God had not given them to you. The food you eat, God gave to you. The clothes you wear God gave to you. Have you been thinking that you got these in some other way? Did you suppose that mother gave you the food and father your clothing. Tell me where did your mother get the food with which she satisfied your hunger this morning? Did not God give it to her? Go over in your mind what you have this day eaten and you will see that God gave it all. Look at the clothing you have on. You will see, and your teacher will help you to see that God gave it all to you. The house you live in, when you are in your own home, God gave you that. Think of each part of it by itself. The stone, the wood, the brick, the lime,—ask your teacher if God did not give you every part of it. And this church in which you are now learning of Him, and this teacher who is teaching you. He gave them all.

When you see all this can you not love him? But we must try to show you that you are not only to love Him a little, but you are to love Him with your *whole* heart — your *whole* soul — your *whole* mind — your *whole* strength.

What does this mean? If you love any person a great deal, you love them with your whole heart. It is not a love that is one hour in your heart, and gone the next. It is not very strong one day and very weak the next. It is one steady, strong, perpetual blessing to you and to them. This is loving with your whole heart. So must you love God.

You must love Him with your whole aoul. Ask your teacher to tell you what this means.

You must love Him with your whole mind, and this means you must understand Him. This means so much that we cannot tell you all of it to-day. But you must love this heart-love — this mind-love — this soul-love — with all your strength.

We cannot talk with you of the other commandment to-day, but try to learn the love of God, and the love of man will come next.

## Cross-Word Enigma.

1. There are four little girls. Their names are Gertie, Sophy, Louise, and Dora. Take one particular letter from each name, and see what they all are.

2. There are five little boys. Their names are Bertie, Henry Sammy, David and James. Do the same with their names, and see what they all are.

## Conundrum.

Can you tell me why
A deceitful eye
Can better descry,
Than you or I,
Upon how many toes
A pussy-cat goes?


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